

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-31 are presently pending in this application, with Claims 1-12 canceled and Claims 13, 15-16, 19-20, and 23-26 amended by the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-8 and 10-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2000344353 (JP '353); Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '353 in view of Kim (U.S. Patent 6,009,060); and Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '353 in view of Goto et al (U.S. Patent 6,307,828 B1, hereinafter Goto).

Claims 13 and 23-26 are amended to more clearly state and distinctly claim Applicants' invention. Claims 13, 15-16, 19-20, and 23-26 are further amended to recite that the first resin covered edge is tapered. Support for these amendments is found in Applicants' originally filed Figure 5. No new matter is added.

Briefly recapitulating, Claim 13 is directed to a disc support plate. For example, referring to the non-limiting embodiment of Figs. 4-8, the disc support plate 2 includes a substrate (2a) which has a first tapered edge portion (2c) and a second edge portion (2d). The substrate is configured to allow a disc to be loaded onto the disc support plate 2 from the first tapered edge portion (2c) to the second edge portion (2d) along a disc loading direction (see Fig. 4). *A resin portion (2b) is provided only on the first tapered edge portion (2c), the second edge portion (2d) and a line-shaped portion (2e) provided between the first tapered edge portion (2c) and the second edge portion (2d).* Independent Claims 23-26 recite alternative embodiments of Applicants' invention, each including a resin covered first tapered edge. Since the resin portion (2b) is provided only on the first tapered edge portion (2c), the

second edge portion (2d) and the line-shaped portion (2e), the disc support plate 2 may readily retain the disc horizontally.¹

JP '353 discloses a disc tray 23 in which a resin portion 23c is provided on the entire surface of the substrate 23b except for the circular concave portion 23a. However, JP '353 does not disclose Applicants' claimed resin portion (provided only on a first tapered edge portion, a second edge portion, and a line-shaped portion provided between the first tapered edge portion and the second edge portion. Applicants have considered the cited Kim and Goto references and submit that these references do not cure the deficiencies of JP '353.

As none of the cited prior art, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest all the elements of independent Claims 1 and 23-26, Applicants submit the inventions defined by Claims 1 and 24-26, and all claims depending therefrom, are not rendered obvious by the asserted prior art for at least the reasons stated above.²

Accordingly, in view of the present amendment and in light of the previous discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Bradley D. Lytle
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 40,073
Michael E. Monaco
Registration No. 52,041

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000

Fax: (703) 413-2220

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¹ Specification, page 2, line 13 – page 3, line 11.

² MPEP § 2142 "...the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest **all** the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. In re Vaeck, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991)."